

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SP, US, BASE

SUBJ: US-SPANISH AGREEMENT, CONVERSATION WITH PRIME MINISTER

1. I CALLED AT MY REQUEST ON PRIME MINISTER ARIAS OCTOBER 8 AND OUR CONVERSATION FOCUSED MAINLY ON THE CONCLUSION OF THE FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT. ARIAS SAID THAT HE HAD A BRIEF CONVERSATION WITH CORTINA, WHO ALSO HAD REPORTED TO THE CABINET MEETING ON MONDAY. CORTINA HAD ALSO REPORTED TO FRANCO. ARIAS SAID HE WAS NOT FAMILIAR WITH ALL THE DETAILS OF THE AGREEMENT, BUT HE WAS PLEASED TO HEAR OF THE SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME OF THE CONVERSATIONS IN WASHINGTON AND NEW YORK.

2. I TOLD ARIAS THAT WE, TOO, WERE SATISFIED WITH THE OUTCOME AND THAT WE WERE NOW PREPARING TO MOVE FORWARD RAPIDLY TO COMPLETE THE SUPPLEMENTARY AGREEMENTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE UNDERSTANDING REACHED BY THE SECRETARY AND CORTINA. I INFORMED ARIAS THAT INFORMAL TALKS HAD ALREADY BEEN HELD WITH KEY MEMBERS OF CONGRESS TO INFORM THEM OF THE CONTENTS OF THE FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT AND WHAT WOULD BE COVERED BY THE SUPPLEMENTARY AGREEMENTS. I EMPHASIZED THAT IN THESE INFORMAL CONVERSATIONS AND LATER IN THE MORE FORMAL SESSIONS WITH CONGRESS WHEN THE ENTIRE AGREEMENT HAS BEEN CONCLUDED, IT WOULD BE NECESSARY FOR THE ADMINISTRATION TO EXPLAIN PUBLICLY THAT THE AGREEMENT WAS NOT A MUTUAL CONFIDENTIAL

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DEFENSE OR SECURITY COMMITMENT, BUT RATHER THE DEFINI-

TION OF A COOPERATIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH SPAIN WHICH INCLUDED DEFENSE, BUT WHICH DID NOT COMMIT THE UNITED STATES TO THE DEFENSE OF SPAIN IN THE WAY WE ARE COMMITTED TO OUR NATO ALLIES BY THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY. I TOLD ARIAS THAT I THOUGHT IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT THIS BE UNDERSTOOD AT THE VERY OUTSET AND STRESSED THAT THE SECRETARY HAD MADE THIS POINT VERY CLEARLY TO CORTINA. I STRESSED THAT THIS WAS NOT DIRECTED AGAINST SPAIN AS SUCH, BUT RATHER THAT IT DERIVED FROM THE ATTITUDE OF CONGRESS AND OF PUBLIC OPINION THAT THE US SHOULD NOT UNDERTAKE FURTHER BILATERAL DEFENSE COMMITMENTS. IN THIS RESPECT, I MENTIONED THE DEBATE IN CONGRESS OVER THE SINAI ACCORD.

3. ARIAS, WHO LISTENED CAREFULLY TO MY PRESENTATION, SAID THAT CORTINA HAD NOT MADE THIS POINT TO HIM. PERHAPS THE AGREEMENT WAS NOT AS SATISFACTORY AS HE HAD THOUGHT AS IT DID NOT APPEAR TO PROVIDE THE EQUALITY OF TREATMENT WHICH SPAIN SOUGHT AND HAD THE RIGHT TO EXPECT IN VIEW OF ITS CONTRIBUTIONS TO WESTERN DEFENSE.

4. ARIAS THEN LAUNCHED INTO A LONG COMMENTARY ON THE IRRATIONAL ATTITUDE OF MANY EUROPEAN NATO COUNTRIES WITH RESPECT TO SPAIN ALONG ALREADY FAMILIAR LINES. HE MENTIONED IN PARTICULAR THE RATHER INCONGRUOUS ATTITUDE OF EUROPEAN COUNTRIES TOWARD TOTAL ANARCHY REIGNING IN PORTUGAL WHICH CONTINUES TO SLIDE TOWARD COMMUNIST TAKEOVER, AND THEIR ATTITUDE TOWARD SPAIN WHICH REMAINED A BULWARK AGAINST COMMUNIST EXPANSION. HE COMMENTED THAT A GOOD MANY OF THE SMALLER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES CONTRIBUTED VIRTUALLY NOTHING TOWARD THE DEFENSE OF THE WEST ALTHOUGH THEY ARE MEMBERS OF NATO, WHILE SPAIN'S CONTRIBUTION WAS OF CONSIDERABLE IMPORTANCE. THE EUROPEANS IN THEIR IRRATIONALITY CONTINUED TO THINK THAT

IT WAS IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE WEST TO ISOLATE SPAIN.

5. I STRESSED TO ARIAS THAT WE IN NO WAY SHARED THIS EUROPEAN ATTITUDE AND THE VERY FACT THAT THE SECRETARY HAD CONCLUDED A FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT WITH CORTINA AT CONFIDENTIAL

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THIS VERY TIME WAS CLEAR PROOF OF THAT. WE VALUED OUR RELATIONS WITH SPAIN AND FULLY RECOGNIZED THE CONTRIBUTION

THAT SPAIN MAKES TO WESTERN DEFENSE. ARIAS CONCLUDED BY EXPRESSING THE HOPE THAT THE SUPPLEMENTARY AGREEMENTS COULD BE RAPIDLY CONCLUDED AND EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THE SECRETARY'S PERSONAL ROLE IN THE NEGOTIATIONS.

6. COMMENT: IT WAS CLEAR FROM WHAT ARIAS SAID THAT
CORTINA IS PASSING OVER LIGHTLY OR IGNORING WHAT WAS
SAID IN WASHINGTON ABOUT THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF OUR AC-
CEPTING A DEFENSE COMMITMENT AND OF THE NEED TO INFORM
CONGRESS THAT THE AGREEMENT HAS NO SUCH IMPLICATION. I
THINK ARIAS NOW CLEARLY UNDERSTANDS THE POINT EVEN
THOUGH HE WAS NOT VERY HAPPY ABOUT IT.
STABLER

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